

From: Fred Oberkamp
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/4/02 6:29pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement??

To Whom it May Concern:

After review of the alleged "Microsoft Settlement", I am simply amazed. I have been in management and management consulting in the Information Technologies industry for over 25 years and this settlement is about as close to a whitewash as anything I have ever seen.

Microsoft has been "licking its chops" for the education market for years and you are willing to give it to them with this settlement. Schools are the training ground for young minds. What our children learn in school will be carried out into the business world with them. You are giving Microsoft the absolute and undisputed authority to monopolize this market with their "free" give away. I cannot wait to see Microsoft's advertising campaign in about a year when they can legitimately claim that they have been "selected" by 100% of the schools in the country as their Operating System of choice, thanks to your settlement. This does not even consider that most of the refurbished equipment that Microsoft has proposed to give to the schools will probably not be compatible with its newer Operating Systems. Schools being as tight with budgets as they are known to be will probably spend a fortune upgrading the equipment rather than just get rid of it like they should.

You are also opening up all of our schools to hackers with this settlement. This is due to the well-documented (and possibly as of yet unfound) security "holes" in the current Microsoft Operating Systems. Just what this country needs is to have our school systems spending millions of dollars to fight electronic invasions. Has anyone considered how devastating that could be to this country?

Furthermore, Microsoft continues to gobble up small software companies that would have been their competition. At this time, that can only be blamed on the greed of the owners of those companies and Microsoft's total disregard for any previous agreement they may have had to cease their predatory practices with the Department of Justice.

It is my personal opinion and that of many others I have spoken with, that we, the American taxpayers and citizens, have been sold down the river with this proposed settlement. If this process is allowed to continue, this settlement will only serve to make it appear to the normal citizen that enough money can buy its own justice. That may seem like a rather harsh statement, but companies like AT&T have gone through far more serious penalties than this proposed settlement even comes close to and they have survived quite well.

Thank you for your time,
F.J. Oberkamp